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Agenda item 64 (a)
Promotion and protection of the rights of children

Argentina, Burkina Faso, Canada, Italy, Netherlands, Peru, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Zambia: draft resolution

Child, early and forced marriage

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolution 68/148 of 18 December 2013 on child, early and forced marriage,

Recalling its resolutions 68/146 of 18 December 2013 on the girl child and 67/144 of 20 December 2012 on the intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women, as well as Human Rights Council resolution 24/23 of 27 September 2013, entitled "Strengthening efforts to prevent and eliminate child, early and forced marriage: challenges, achievements, best practices and implementation gaps",[1]

Guided by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[2] the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights[3] and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,[3] as well as other relevant human rights instruments, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child[4] and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[5]

Reaffirming the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,[6] as well as the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and

[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 53A* (A/68/53/Add.1), chap. III.
[2] Resolution 217 A (III).
[3] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.
[4] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.
[5] Ibid., vol. 1249, No. 20378.
[6] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

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Development,[7] the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action[8] and the outcome documents of their review conferences,

Welcoming the agreed conclusions adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-eighth session,

Welcoming also the report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on preventing and eliminating child, early and forced marriage,[9] the summary report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the panel discussion on preventing and eliminating child, early and forced marriage[10] and the summary report of the panel discussion of the General Assembly held on 5 September 2014,

Recognizing that child, early and forced marriage is a harmful practice that violates human rights and that such violations have a disproportionately negative impact on women and girls, and underscoring States' human rights obligations and commitments to promote and protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of women and girls,

Deeply concerned about the continued prevalence of child, early and forced marriage worldwide and about the fact that approximately 14 million girls are married every year before they reach 18 years of age and that more than 700 million women and girls alive today were married before their eighteenth birthday,

Noting with concern that the continued prevalence of child, early and forced marriage has slowed the achievement of shared development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and their overarching aims, including in the areas of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, poverty reduction, education and health, including sexual and reproductive health, and recognizing that child, early and forced marriage continues to impair sustainable and inclusive economic growth and social cohesion,

Recognizing that child, early and forced marriage is inherently linked to deep-rooted gender inequalities, norms and stereotypes, and harmful practices, perceptions and customs that are obstacles to the full enjoyment of human rights and that the persistence of child, early and forced marriage places children, in particular the girl child, at risk of being exposed to and encountering various forms of discrimination and violence throughout their lives,

Noting with concern that poverty and insecurity are among the root causes of child, early and forced marriage and that child, early and forced marriage remains common in rural areas and among the poorest communities, and recognizing that child, early and forced marriage is itself a barrier to development and helps to perpetuate the cycle of poverty and that the risk of child, early and forced marriage is also exacerbated in conflict and humanitarian crisis situations,

Recognizing that child, early and forced marriage undermines women's and girls' autonomy and decision-making in all aspects of their lives and continues to be

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[7] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[8] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[9] A/HRC/26/22 and Corr.1.

[10] A/HRC/27/34.

an impediment to improvements in the educational, economic and social status of women in all parts of the world and that the empowerment of and investment in girls is critical for economic growth, including the eradication of poverty, as well as the meaningful participation of girls in all decisions that affect them,

Noting with concern that child, early and forced marriage disproportionally affects girls who have received little or no formal education and is itself a significant obstacle to educational opportunities for girls and young women, in particular girls who are forced to drop out of school owing to marriage and/or childbirth, and recognizing that educational opportunities are directly related to women's and girls' empowerment, employment and economic opportunities and to their active participation in economic, social and cultural development, governance and decision-making,

Recognizing that child, early and forced marriage constitutes a serious threat to multiple aspects of the physical and psychological health of women and girls, including but not limited to their sexual and reproductive health, significantly increasing the risk of early and frequent pregnancy, maternal and newborn mortality and morbidity, obstetric fistula and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, as well as increasing vulnerability to various forms of violence, including physical, psychological and sexual violence, and that every girl and woman at risk of or affected by these practices must have equitable access to quality services like education, counselling, shelter, sexual, psychological and reproductive health services and medical care,

1. *Urges* all States to enact, harmonize and strictly uphold laws and policies ending child, early and forced marriage and protecting those at risk and ensure that marriage is entered into only with the informed, free and full consent of the intended spouses;

2. *Calls on* States, with the participation of relevant stakeholders, including girls, religious and community leaders, civil society, women's and human rights groups, men and boys, and youth organizations, to develop and implement holistic, comprehensive and coordinated responses and strategies to eliminate child, early and forced marriage and to support already married adolescents, including through the sharing of best practices across borders;

3. *Urges* Governments to promote and protect the human rights of all women and girls, including their right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence, and to adopt and accelerate the implementation of laws, policies and programmes that protect and enable the enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including reproductive rights, in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,[7] the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action[8] and the outcome documents of their review conferences;

4. *Notes with appreciation* the inclusion of a target on eliminating all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage, in the outcome document of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals,[11] and recognizes its importance in the final framework for the post-2015 development

[11] A/68/970.

agenda in order to help ensure progress towards the elimination of child, early and forced marriage as a barrier to development and the full realization of women's and girls' human rights;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly a comprehensive report before the end of its [...] session on progress towards ending child, early and forced marriage worldwide since the issuance of the report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights,[9] with particular emphasis on high-prevalence countries, best practices for programmes aimed at ending the practice and supporting already married women and girls, gaps in research and implementation, and legal reforms and policies related to this matter, using information provided by Member States, United Nations bodies, agencies, funds and programmes, civil society and other relevant stakeholders;

6. *Decides* to continue its consideration of the issue of child, early and forced marriage under the item entitled "Promotion and protection of the rights of children", taking into account the multifaceted and worldwide nature of the issue of child, early and forced marriage.